THE BIRTH-PRIVILEDGE:

OR,

Covenant-Holineſſe

of Beleevers and their Iſſue in the time of the Goſpel.

TOGETHER

With the Right of Infants to Baptiſme.

By *Thomas Blake* M^r of Arts.

PSAL. 127. 3. *Loe, children are an heritage of the Lord.*

ISAIAH 49. 22.

Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and ſet up my ſtandard to the people: and they ſhall bring thy ſons in their arms: and thy daughters ſhall be carried upon their ſhoulders.

ACTS 11.17.

Foraſmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who beleeved on the Lord Ieſus Christ: what was I that I could withſtand God?

LONDON,

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To his dearly affected and beloved the Bailiffes and Burgesses of the antient Borrough of *Tamworth* in the Counties of *Stafford* and *Warwick* together with all the Inhabitants *of the said Parish.*

LOud and piercing are the cryes and groanes under the burden of those pressures which the hand of God hath brought upon his people: *The yoke* of their *transgression is bound by his hand, they are Wreathed, and come upon* their *neck:* These need not to be presented to your *eyes* or *eares.* The frequent *changes* which you have seen, and *visits* of men *skilfull to destroy*, have given you abundant and wofull experience: yet I account it among one of Gods mighty works that your sorrowes, by his over-ruling providence, are so stinted, that the rage of men hath not brought them to a greater height: While you have tasted of *Justice*, you are not shut out from *mercy and compassion:* when I might not speake to you, I have held it my dutie *to speake for you*: In the midst of all, this must be our rest, *That the Lord of hosts is With us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.* Having a *Covenant of Grace* to plead, we may say as *Israel* of old, *See We beseech thee, We are all thy people.* And as *posteritie* is not the least of our care, to seek *a right Way*, as for our *selves*, so for our *little ones*, that a *generation to come, a people that shall be created may praise the Lord:* So it is of the greatest of our comforts, that *posteritie*, our *little ones*, and those that shall be *born*, are bound up of God in the same *promise*; And that, in one and the same plea, we may seek to the Throne of Grace, for more then one age at once. When God had spoke to *David of his house for a great While to come*, revealing it to him,

Ier. 18.20. *Psal.* 46.11. *Isai.* 64.9. *Ezra* 8.21. *Psal.* 102.18.

2 Sam. 7.19, 27. that he would *build him an house*; *Therefore hath thy servant* (saith he) *found in his heart to pray this prayer to thee.* The *promise* was the *ground*, on which his prayer was bottom'd. Take off the promise of God to your houses for time to come, and the foundation of your prayers for posteritie is shaken. This was the endevour of some among you, *who are of those that lye in wait to deceive*, scattering in the *dark* such doctrines that will not beare the *light*; which occasioned these present meditations, which you once heard delivered in your eares, and now are presented with some advantage (for more full consideration) to your eyes: I had encouragements to make them publike, especially by the fruit, with which (through Gods mercy) I have understood, they were crowned in a way, that I least expected, and being of right your due, as a free-will offering then tendered I could seek no other, nor greater Patron. I am more ambitious of your happinesse, then the favour of those that are placed highest. I have served you for Christ a *double apprentiship of yeares* almost compleat; which time hath seemed to some to have added more then a *third* to the *yeares of the dayes of my pilgrimage*; This is to me the strongest engagement of affections, and shall so remaine. If there have been but one *new born*, or so much as a *cubite* added to the *stature* of any towards *the measure of the fulnesse of Christ*, I have sufficient; And having not another Legacie, I must *commend* to *you*, or rather *you* unto the *Word of Gods Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*; still *praying* that the *God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepheard of the sheep, through the bloud of the everlasting testament, make you perfect in all good works, to doe his will, working in you that which is pleasant in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise for ever and ever.* Amen.

And remaining yours in all
bowels of affection,

Thomas Blake.

TO THE
Christian impartiall Reader.

OUR Respect to Infants in our tender of them to Christ hath been challenged as over-large: The first that appeared on that part to denie their accesse were his own Disciples: The first that stood up for vindication of their right was Christ himselfe: An errour then suppreſt, as soon as conceived, I would we could make like speed with such heterogeneall fancies, that they might prove such untimely births. Reforming-*times have ever been found this way unhappily fruitfull; In which* Satan *acts the first part, endevouring* evill *in an equall measure to that* good *which he suspects is comming to a Nation. The* pride of man *followes close after: Every one thinkes he must be* doing, *and bring one* stone *at least to the* work, *which if it be not polished in some new way the workman is at losse of all his honour; And the lower he is in place and seemes in parts, the more is his renowne heightened in so great atchievements. This makes way for an argument of an immediate call, and some what like at least to divine Enthusiasmes: which not a few now doe challenge; who being demanded by what* authoritie *they enter upon the work of the* Stewards of the Mysteries of God, *they straight hold forth the* Apostles *for their Presidents, but* the signes of such Apostles *we want in them. When* Paul *had not a calling* from man, *he could produce it from* Jesus Christ, *and when he received it not* from men, nor was taught *it, he could instance in the* Revelation of Jesus Christ: *Which way soever it comes to passe, the work is much retarded,* and the way of truth ill spoken off. *But there is one rule to which we must appeale:* The Law and the Testimonie. *This triall those of immediate and Divine* Call *did not decline, yea* Christ *himself*

Amos 7.14,15.
Gal. 1. 1.
Gal. 1.12.
2 *Pet.* 1. 2.
Isa. 8.20.
Acts 17.11.

Iob.5.39. 2 Pet.1.19. *did desire. And* Peter *when he had* a voice from heaven *to give in, yet he esteemed* a word of Prophecy *as* more sure *for his people. And when we give this honour of Covenant-holinesse and Covenant-seals to Infants, there is all reason that we give the world an account of our practise, especially suffering that Affront, which those in the Gospel met with in their tender of Infants. Here is somewhat produced to that end, and left to thy Judicious censure. The Authour hath spared all invective language, and intreats like dealing from any that differs in opinion. Some will complain of a naked Margin, to which much might be said, The Authour was with books, when it was compiled for the* Pulpit, *but taken from them when it was fitted for the* Presse. *So that use of Marginall References must have put him upon the borrowed copies of others, and a new pains for quotation of Chapter & Page. Besides the quotations desired must either have been* friends, *and so their Evidence would be challenged; or else* Adversaries, *which perhaps might provoke some personall offences and distaste, which the Authour studiously professeth to avoid. We all must* stand or fall to our Master, *and this dispute must stand or fall according to his* sentence *which is the* Voyce of Scriptures. *If this put no end to the difference, the dispute will be everlasting.* Witnesses *from the* dead *are in vain mustered, when* Moses and the Prophets, Prophets *and* Apostles *cannot be heard. If by this candle from thence lighted thou seest any thing, to make more clear this title, to thy selfe and posterity, let God have the praise, and the Authour thy prayers.*

Rom.14.4. Iohn 12.48. Luke 16.31. Ephes.2.20.

THE

THE BIRTH-PRIVILEDGE.

GAL. 2. 15.

We who are Jewes by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles.

THis Chapter contains a two-fold Narration of the Apostle, 1. Of his journey to Jerusalem, with the severall occurrents which happened there: brought in by him for the vindication of his Apostleship, from the first to the eleventh vers. 2. Of his dealing with *Peter* at Antioch, which Narration some say is continued to the end of the Chapter, others that it is broke off at the seventeenth verse, and in the verses that follow the Apostle doth not relate what he said to *Peter*, but directs his words to the *Galathians* to whom he writes, which difference I intend not now to examine. My text is within this last Narration or report of the Apostle. *The Introduction.*

In which observe,

1. The occasion given by *Peter*: *Before that certain came from* James *he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come he withdrew, and separated himselfe.* *Verse* 12.

2. The Issue which followed upon this carriage of his, *And the other Iewes dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that* Barnabas *also was carried away with their dissimulation.* *Verse* 13.

3. The Arguments brought for conviction of *Peter* of this error, which are two,

First,

Verse 14. First, in the fourteenth verse, *If thou, being a Iew, liveſt after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as doe the Iewes, why compelleſt thou the Gentiles to live as doe the Iewes?* Thus the Argument runs, It is unreaſonable to draw others into a practice, that thou thy ſelfe purpoſely forbeareſt: But thou thy ſelfe keepeſt not the Jewiſh Rites and Ordinances; And therefore it is an unreaſonable, and a blame-worthy practice, by thy example to compell others to their obſervation: yea, thou being a Jew takeſt thy ſelfe to have freedome, unreaſonably then doſt thou draw on others, who were never under any ſuch obligation.

Verſes 15, 16. The ſecond Argument is in the fifteenth and ſixteenth Verſes, *We who are Iewes by nature, and not ſinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not juſtified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Ieſus Chriſt, even we have beleeved in Ieſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by the faith of Chriſt, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified:* which is thus inforced: In that way wherein we who are Jewes, with all our birth-priviledges, cannot attain to righteouſneſſe, we may not teach the Gentiles to attain to it: But we who are Jewes by nature, and not ſinners of the Gentiles, cannot this way attain to righteouſneſſe: We know that a man is juſtified by faith, we are compelled to quit the Law, and to cleave to faith without works for juſtification.

The words of the text contain,

Diviſion. { First, the Priviledge of *Peter, Paul, Barnabas*, with the reſt of the Jewes.
{ Secondly, The Character of the *Gentiles*, in oppoſition to the *Iewes*.

As to the full purpoſe, for which the words are brought by the Apoſtle, they have (for the ſenſe of them) their dependance on the words that follow; but ſo farre as they contain the priviledge of the *Iewes*, in oppoſition to, and above the *Gentiles*, ſo farre they are full of themſelves, ſhewing firſt *poſitively*, what himſelf and *Peter* were: *Iewes by nature*: Secondly, *Negatively*, what they were not; *ſinners of the Gentiles*.

Explication. For ſome explication: *Nature* is here taken, not in the proper, but vulgar acceptation, *for birth or deſcent from Anceſtors*: As uſually, in our common phraſe of ſpeech, we ſay men are *naturally Dutch, French, Spaniſh, Iriſh*; when they are ſuch *born and bred*, this Scripture therefore *Camero* cites for one, in which the Apoſtle ſpeaks after the vulgar manner: we have a Scripture paralell with this *Rom.* 11.24. where *Nature*, and *naturall* is only by birth and off-ſpring: *Peter, Paul, Barnabas* were all *naturally Iewes*, born of Jewiſh parents and bred up in the way and Religion of the Jewes: ſuch only *Chriſt* choſe for Apoſtles, being himſelf *a Miniſter of the Circumciſion*: *Peter* therefore being one of the twelve, muſt neceſſarily be ſuch, *Paul* was ſuch, as we know from his owne mouth, *a Iew, and of the tribe of Benjamin*, *Barnabas* was ſuch *of the tribe of Levi*. And being ſuch, they enjoyed a priviledge which the *Gentiles* wanted, they were by birth & off-ſpring of a *Nation that is holy*: No Nation *was ſo great as they who had God ſo nigh unto them, who had Statutes and Iudgements ſo righteous*. The Jew had every way *Prerogatives & advantages, but chiefly the Oracles of God*: *God had not dealt ſo with every Nation*; when other Nations were *without God*, they had *God nigh unto them*, when others were *unclean*, they were *holy*:

Rom. 15.8. *Act.* 22.3. *Phil.* 3.5. *Act.* 4.36. *Exod.* 19.6. *Deut.* 4.7, 8. *Rom.* 3.1. *Pſal.* 147.20.

This

This great priviledge of birth Gentiles wanted, and ſo were by off-ſpring *ſinners*, as birth renders all ſo they remaine, *unholy* and *uncleane* among the *unholy* and *uncleane*: without any ſuch title to the Covenant of God that thereby they might obtaine any other denomination, they are *dogs* while the people in Covenant are *children*. And by this meanes the ſeeming oppoſition which is betweene this text and that of the Apoſtle *Epheſ.*2.3. is eaſily reconciled; Here the Apoſtle makes *an oppoſition in nature* betweene Jewes and Gentiles; Jewes by nature had a priviledge above Gentiles; there he makes Jew and Gentile *in nature equall*: *We* (ſaith he) *were by nature children of wrath as well as others*, as well as heathens that have no birth-priviledge; *Nature* in that text is not the ſame as *Nature* in this: *Nature there is taken for the qualification of nature*, which is equally defiled in Jewes as Gentiles, which is there evidenced in the converſation of the Jewes being (before converſion by grace) the very ſame with the Gentiles: *Among whom alſo we all had our converſation in times paſt, in the luſts of our fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* *Nature here* is taken for a *birth-priviledge*, and ſo the Jewes (though in themſelves ſinners) are reputed an holy people, a people by Covenant holy to the Lord: *Nature* ſimply conſidered is ſtained, and renders Jewes and Gentiles equally *ſinners* and obnoxious to Gods wrath, of which Juſtification by faith is an acknowledgement as the Apoſtle here ſhewes, *verſ.*17. But *birth of Jewiſh anceſtors*, of the ſtocke of Iſraell, puts them into a ſelect condition, into the number of a people *holy to the Lord*; Neither is this any contradiction; *Common things* dedicated for holy ſervice and uſe are *holy*, A people by *nature ſinners*, dedicated to the Lord, are for *holy ſervice and uſe*, for the ſervice of the *Lord*, when others are for ſervice of *Idols*; Therefore *Ieruſalem*, a City none of the holieſt for any tranſcendent manners of the Inhabitants thereof, is yet called by the Evangeliſt the *Holy city*, by reaſon of the *temple* and *worſhip* there that were *holy*, and from hence this obſervation followes; Epheſ.2.3. Mat.4.5.

A people that enjoy Gods Ordinances convey to their Iſſue a priviledge to be reputed of a ſociety that is holy, to be numbred amongſt, not uncleane, but holy perſons. Obſervation.

For proofe, ſee the Covenant of God made with *Abraham*, *I will eſtabliſh my Covnant betweene me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee in their generations, for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy ſeede after thee.* *God is* one party in this Covenant, *Abraham and his poſterity* make the other; theſe in their ſucceeding generations are the people of God, and ſo by *nature* (that is birth priviledge) *holy*. And the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the Iſraelites in his time, ſaith, *To them pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the Covenants, the giving of the Law, and the ſervice, and the promiſes.* They were a people in Covenant, having the holy oracles of God they were the ſervants of the great God, and therefore the *glory* above others was theirs. Hence is it that *the Name of God is called upon them* age after age, and not upon any others that joyne not themſelves to them. The *land of their habitation* where they dwelt, and enjoyed this peculiar priviledge is ordinarily Gen.17.7. Rom.9.4. Ier.14.9. Iſa.63.19.

Isa 8.8. Isa.19.18. Deut 14.1,2. Isa.64.18. Rom.11.16, 17. Gen.17.12.

stiled the *holy land*, being the land of *Immanuel*. And the *language* which they there spoke the *holy language* being a marke to discerne the *people of God*: The distinguishing and discriminating Epithite given to them was still *holy*: Even all of this *roote* who were *branches* of *Abraham*, *Isaack*, *Iacob*, all of this *lumpe* whereof *Abraham*, *Isaack*, *Iacob* were the *first fruits*, they peculiarly had this honour to receive *in their flesh* the signe and seale of this Covenant, and that in infancy, almost as soone as borne, being eight dayes old, which was their distinction from all others: *Iew* and *Circumcision*, *Iew* and the *people of God* were still the same.

Enlargements.

To adde some more strength to this observation, take notice of these enlargements.

1. A *loose life* in a parent, who by birth priviledge is of the people of God, doth not divest his issue of this priviledge, to be of the people of God, but they are, with a *non obstante*, (notwithstanding any such vicious wayes of the parent) to be enrolled in this number: For proofe of this, looke upon that act of *Iosshua*; when the people were got out of the wildernesse and were brought into the land of *Canaan*; *The children of* Israel *walked forty yeares in the wildernesse, till all the people, that were men of warre, which came out of Ægypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: And the children which he raised up in their stead, them* Joshuah *circumcised, for they were uncircumcised, they had not circumcised them in the way*: you see what the *fathers* were, yet the *children Ioshuah* ordered to be circumcised: concerning their *conversation*, the *parents* were *enemies*, but as touching the *election*, the choyce made of God, the *Issue* is to be numbred among the *beloved*: Who had a worse *father* then *Iosiah*, yet where was there a better *son*, a circumcised man, who in youth began to seeke the God of his father *David*?

Iosh.5.6,7. 2 Chro.34.3.

2. *Misbeliefe* in a parent, divests not the Issue of this birth-priviledge, though the father erre in the faith yet the child is not to be shut out of the number of believers: We have, in this particular, our Apostle for a president: Had misbeliefe in the parent, denuded the child of this priviledge, St *Paul*, had not beene a *Iew by nature*, but an *heretick or sectary by nature*, being before conversion a *Pharisee, and the sonne of a Pharisee*: *Scribe* was a name of *office*, but *Pharisee* the name of a *sect*: and therefore Christ warnes to *beware of the leaven*, that is, *of the doctrine of the Pharisees*, as of the *Sadducees*; such was *Pauls* parentage, and yet by descent and of-spring he is of the people of the *Iewes*.

Acts 23.6. Acts 26.5. Mat.16.6,11.

3. *Apostasie* from the faith in an immediate parent, who himselfe by descent was of the people of God, doth not debarre the Issue of this priviledge. *Ahaz* was such, yet his posterity were of the *Iewes*, and not *sinners of the Gentiles*. *Thou hast taken thy sonnes and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them. Is this of thy whoredomes a small matter, that thou hast slaine my children, and delivered them, to cause them to passe through the fire for them?* These men of spirituall whoredome, worshippers of the *Idoll Moloch*, bring forth children to *God*, they make themselves, *sinners of the Gentiles* by their going a whoring from God, and yet their children are *by nature Iewes*, their children *God* doth owne, and

2 Chro.28.2,3, 4. Ezek.16.20,21.

calls

calls *his* children. While the parents live within the pale of the Church, that the seed may enjoy saving Ordinances, they are to be so accounted.

4. *Illegitimation of birth*, adulterous copulation in the parents divesteth not such Issue of this priviledge. *David* had never in that manner sought in fasting and prayer his childs life, had he believed that he must not have borne of the seed of the Jewes, but the uncircumcised heathen. *Pharez* was of such a birth, yet who bare a greater name and glory in Israel then he? and his family? even where the illegitimation of his birth is noted, there the glory of his Race is magnified, which is yet further honoured, in that *Christ*, according to the flesh, was made of his seed, That *seed of Abraham per Eminentiam* was out of his loynes. *Iephtah*, was indeed driven out by his brethren, but not because that he was not of the seed of the *Iewes* and people of God, but because they would not have him to share of the inheritance among them.

4. Gen. 38. 29. Ruth. 4. 18. Iudg. 11. 2.

1. The maine ground of this, is the great *Charter* of Heaven, which God pleases to grant unto those whom he takes, and chooses to himselfe upon earth If a King grant to any subject a *personall* priviledge, as to keepe his great Seale, to be Lord Treasurer, this priviledge dyes with him his posterity hath nothing to doe with the Seale or Exchequer, unlesse the Prince finding them qualified, makes a second choice of them, which doth not often happen. But in case the priviledge be *perpetuall* and successive, and not terminated in the person, but the words of the grant runne to them and their heires, then the priviledge remaines to posterity. *Noblemen* with us, have their *honours*, not for themselves only, but their Issue; and some men have Offices, which they call *Offices of inheritance*: And all *English* subjects, have divers *Immunities* and freedomes. Now the great *Charter* of Heaven, runs in the largest words, *to them and their seed after them, in all generations.*

Reasons. 1. Gen. 17. 7. Act. 2. 38.

2. This is of the nature of those things, which descend from parent to child, from Ancestors to posterity; In that *Religion* which is of God we have here found it, and all other *Religions* doe lay claime to it.

2.

There are those things indeed, which are personally inherent in men, and proper to them, so that they cannot convey them to their issue, there is no deriving of them to others by succession, as

1. *Individuall accidents* of the body, wounds, scarres or singular comelinesse of feature, these are so in the parent, that they are not conveyed to their children.

2. *Habits or proper guifts*, whether acquired by paines, or infused. The sonne of a learned man inherits not his fathers guifts, The sonne of an Artificer is no such Artist. The sonne of a Prophet hath not by vertue of birth the guift of prophecy, nor is the sonne of a regenerate man, endowed with saving grace for that reason.

There are on the contrary, those things that passe from parent to child, which the parent *by nature or speciall priviledge*, hath power to convey, as

1. *The essentiall* or *integrall parts* of a *species*, with the naturall properties, that doe accompany it, so one *brute beast* brings forth another, one *bird* brings forth another, and *man* brings forth one of mankind.

2. The *privilledges* or *burdens*, which in Family or Nation are hereditary, they are conveyed from parents to posterity, from Ancestors to their Issue: As is the father, so is the child, as respecting these particulars: The child of a *Free-man* with St *Paul* is *free borne*: The child of a *Noble man* is *noble*; The child of a *bond-man* (where servants were wholy their Masters to dispose) is a *bond-man* likewise. So the child, of a *Turke* is a *Turke*; The child of a *Pagan* is a *Pagan*; The child of a *Iew* is a *Iew*; The child of a *Christian* is a *Christian*: As by vertue of the grand *Charter* of Heaven among the people of God, this priviledge doth *descend*: So it is of the nature of those things that are *descendable*.

Acts 22.28.

*Exod.*21.4.

2.

3. The name of *Iew* or *Christian* would not long hold in any family, among any people, if this truth (that there is a generation, according to the flesh, which have this priviledge to be accounted of the people of God) may not be yeelded, but as it is in *trades*, the father is of one, the sonne of another, so we should see it in *religions*: But God provideth for a continuance in succession, from *age* to *age*, from *generation* to *generation*; he keeps them still within Covenant, though many doe degenerate.

Exception. But some say, all this is blowne away at one breath: That the *Iewes* had this priviledge cannot be denied. But this was a priviledge peculiar to the seed of *Abrahams flesh*, and not to the seed of his *faith*: Beleeving *Iewes* had this birthright-priviledge, Beleeving *Christians* have not, they must make profession of their faith before they be accounted among them that be holy.

Satisfaction, 1. In the Negative, the Charter not reverst. I answer, Such a grant God did once vouchsafe by free *Charter* to his people: How can it be made appeare that ever it was *reverst*, or any such *limit* put unto it? The Church of God hath held it in *Fee* by vertue of this *grant* from *Abraham* to this very houre, and there is no word of God to challenge them for usurpation; They that will out us of so long *possession*, must make their *plea* punctuall for our *eviction*.

2. *Heb.*8.6. Secondly, Christians can produce *new Covenant-advancing Scriptures*, that Christs comming put them into a better and more comfortable condition then were beleevers in former ages: I would faine have them to produce any one new *Covenant-depressing Scripture*, to shew that we in any case are in a worse or more uncomfortable condition then our fathers.

Object. If it be said that though this Birth-priviledge be taken away, yet we are not in a worse condition having it in other more desireable things enlarged.

Answ. Let these then shew when, and where this was taken away, and what was given in lieu and recompence of this *want*, and *greatest discomfort* that can come to a parent, as a parent, to have his Issue expunged out of the number of Gods people who are holy: Let them produce those *Scriptures*, which so difference the *old* and *new* Covenant made with believers, that the one should be *perpetuall*, the other *personall*; That the Covenant with the *Iew* shall transcend the Covenant with *Christians*, as an *Inheritance* for ever exceeds a *Grant* for terme of life: Let them give us an hint of any Reason why this priviledge should belong to the heires of *Abrahams body*, and not to the heires of his *faith*. That reason held forth by some, that Christ should

come

come out of his *loynes* is of no force, it excludes all the tribes out of that priviledge but *Iudah*, when every tribe of Israel in this were equall with *Iudah*, every familie of Iudah's tribe but *David's*; And most of all, it would have excluded the seed of the *Proselites*, that according to the flesh were *strangers* to Israel, when yet in this priviledge they were *equall*.

Gen.17.12,13
Exo.12.48,49

But not to rest in *Negatives*, and *Generals*, (though the first grant being presupposed, this might abundantly satisfie) but to come to some *Positive* proofes, particularly evincing this priviledge of Christians.

2. In the Affirmative.

The priviledge cotinued.

Six Arguments.

1. The Apostle in time of the new Testament, when the Spirit was actually given, propounds this Covenant in as full a *latitude*, and ample *extent*, as ever it was made to *Abraham*, or belonged to the *Iewes*, yea in the like words, as under the old Covenant it was delivered: *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Iesus Christ for the remission of sinnes, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afarre off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* I doe not now dispute the end, why this Covenant is there urged, it is enough for the present purpose, that such a Covenant yet remaines, and so concludes the *promise* still to stand in its antient *latitude* and *extent*. Had *God* in these last dayes put this *limit* to it, then the Apostle (now the prophecy of the last dayes was fulfilled) would not have put this *latitude* upon it.

(1.)
Act.2.38,39.

2. The Beleevers of the *Gentiles* succeed the *Iewes* in the Covenant, *Iewes* were broken off that *Gentiles* might be grafted in; and *Iewes* being broken off *Gentiles* were grafted in for them: And beside *Scripture-silence* of any abridgement of priviledge to the successor enjoyed by the predecessor, which is a good ground of claime to the same, we have further *Evidence* in the same place, that it is divolved upon *Gentiles* in as large a way as ever it was enjoyed by *Iewes*: We are now branches of that root by vertue of this insition; and if the *root* be holy the *branches* are holy, is the Apostles argument, and if the *first-fruits* be holy, the *lump* is holy.

(2.)
Rom.11.16,17.

Will it be said, that this proposition is brought by the Apostle, to prove a *remaining holinesse* in the people of the *Iewes*, that they are not so *cast off* but that they shall be againe *received*, but intends no proofe of *Holinesse* in *succession* to the *Gentiles*.

Object.

To this I answer, *first*, That a propositinn universally true may be applyed to all particulars; This position is such, and being by the Apostle confessedly applyed to the *Iewes*, is of equall truth being applyed to the *Gentiles*.

Answ.1.

Secondly, I say, if the *holinesse* of the *Root* (*Abraham, Isaac*, and *Iacob* receiving the promises) be an argument of weight to prove that the whole body of the people of the *Iewes* (were it not for their present actuall unbelief) were all *holy*, with a federall holinesse, and that this their unbeliefe shall yet be done away that they may be again (as before) *holinesse to the Lord*; Then it much more proves that the *Gentiles* remaining in the *Root*, and continuing in the *faith* are universally Root and branch holy.

2.

But this with the Apostle is an argument of weight, as plainly appears in the Chapter: See *vers.*28, and 29. *As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers sakes.*

They were enemies to the Gospel for the Gentiles sake, that *they* might be received, but beloved for their fakes out of whose loynes they issued, and that they shall therefore be again received, is there also demonstrated, seeing *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

Object. Will it be further said, that the Branches, *actually* by faith *engrafted*, are holy, but it doth not follow that these, as a Root, *transmit* any such holinesse to their Issue.

Answ. 1. To this I answer, that the consequence is necessary, first, because the branches of *Ancestors* are the Root of *posteritie*, being made an holy branch; in reference to their issue they now become an holy Root: *Iesse* was a branch of *Abrahams* stock, yet he was the Root of *David* and of *Christ*: A *subordinate* Magistrate is a subject, in reference to his *superior*, yet a man of *authoritie* and command in respect of his *inferiours*: Each man is his fathers *child*, but his childs *father*: So it is here, a *branch* of those that *went before*, is the *root* of those that *follow after.*

Isai. 11. 1.

2. Secondly, The Apostle hath not at all to deale in that place with a *personall* holinesse, but with an holinesse *derivative* and of succession, the personall holinesse mentioned in the objection, and maintained by the adversaries of this Doctrine is qualitative and inherent, derived from no other Root then *Christ*; this here is from *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*, receiving the promises: Either no holinesse at all comes this way to Beleevers, as from *Abrahams* stock, or else it is such as *Abraham* by vertue of the Covenant doth communicate to posteritie.

(3.) *Exod.* 19. 6. *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. *Isai.* 61. 18. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. 3. The *Grand Birth-priviledge*, by the Jewes enjoyed, is to be an *holy Nation*, to have the whole body of their people, as distinguished from others, accounted *holy to the Lord*: This was peculiarly their *honour* from age to age, from generation to generation; But this honour to be a *chosen generation*, an *holy Nation*, a *people peculiar* (Phrases as high as ever were given the Jewes) is given to beleeving Christians: Christians therefore in this Birth-priviledge equall the Nation of the Jewes.

Object. Neither will this be avoyded, by affirming that the text in *Peter*, is meant of the Church invisible, the living and lively members of Christ, who are all holy by an *inherent qualitative* holinesse of *sanctification*; So that here is not any *equalizing* of the body of Christians with the Nation of the Jewes, but only an *allusion* to the titles, given the Iewes to advance the Excellencie of regenerate Christians, called according to Gods purpose.

Answ. The contrary to this in the text is cleare: First, by *looking backe* to the words that there precede; It is meant of all those who doe not professedly, with the unbeleeving Iewes, reject Christ Iesus, which will yet more fully appeare by comparing the words of St *Paul*, *Rom.* 9. 31, 33. But all that doe not professedly reject Christ Iesus, are not men called and qualified as before, *Simon Magus* had enough to make him one of this number: Secondly, by *looking forward*, to that which followes in the *Character* which the Apostle (before he ends his description) addes: *Which in times past were not a people, but now are the people of God*; A speech taken from the Prophet, to let out the case of the Gentiles, as it is also by St *Paul* interpreted, *Rom.* 9. 26. But

Hos. 2. 23.

the

the Gentiles, thus called, and of no people made a people, have all a Covenant holinesse, and not always holinesse inherent. The Gentiles are called *from not-covenant*, into *covenant*; *from non-federation*, into *federation*; This is that call, and therefore a call into Covenant: The *Call* of those who are not a people to be a people of God is the *call of Nations into Covenant*, Deut. 32.21. Rom. 10.19. *I will move them to jealousie, with those that are not a people, I will provoke them to anger, with a foolish Nation*: But this in the text is such a *Call*, and therefore it is the call of a people into Covenant. Deut. 32.21. Rom. 10.19.

4. If there yet remaine in the bosome of the Church, children *born after the flesh*, so that the distinction of *births* as applyed to *Abrahams* seed still hath place among beleeving Christians, And that which fully answers to *Circumcision of the flesh* remaineth among Christians likewise, then it must needs follow, that there is in the Church, that priviledge of *birth-holinesse* still continuing: The *consequence* is evident, seeing the *birth of the flesh*, where this birth-priviledge is denyed, gives no *Church-interest* or title at all; neither doth *Circumcision of the flesh*, or that which is paralell with it, evidence any such Interest or Title: All such are excluded according to this Tenent, who are of carnall descent only, and can claime no other Interest. (4)

This must needs be of force with them who affirme, that *Infants* (who formerly were members by vertue of birth-priviledge) *then were deprived and cast out, when the Iewes Church and State was abrogated, by the comming of Christ*, and *planting other Churches, farre different from that of the Iewes in many respects, That, constituted upon nature* (they say) *and the naturall seed of Abraham. This, upon grace, and the spirituall seed of Abraham; That, therefore termed Israel according to the flesh, and circumcision of the flesh; This, Israel according to the Spirit, and circumcision of the heart*: If then there yet remaine, those that are so stiled, infants of Christians by their own argument, are not rejected, and no such difference between *Iew* and *Christian*, between the State of the Church *then*, and the State of the Church *now*, is to be admitted.

But there yet remaines in the bosome of the Church of Christians those that have no other title or interest then by vertue of birth after the flesh: This distinction of births which they say is abrogated is of the same force and use now as it was when *Abraham* was alive, and that which is full paralell with circumcision of the flesh still remaines: The former, namely distinction of births, we have from St *Paul*: *But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the Spirit, even so it is now.* How is there truth in this assertion of the Apostle, that *so it is now*, if this distinction of births, be now *abrogated* and *abolished*? if there be not in the Church of Christians those that have the same title, and no other, or more noble then had *Ishmael*? of whom the Apostle is there to be understood. Gal. 4.29.

I see the exception that will be taken by some at the phrase [*born of the flesh*] which some will interpret not by naturall *descent*, but *corruption* of nature. But this can be the exception but of a few of those who are herein adversaries, seeing they beleeve no such corruption of birth in *Ishmael*, nor any other; Neither indeed were *Abrahams* children ever so distinguished, by a birth in corruption, and a birth in grace, being all borne in corruption. Birth of the Objection.

flesh,

flesh here is the same as *kinsmen according to the flesh*, Rom. 9. 3. *and children of the flesh*, Rom. 9. 8. But there no birth in *corruption*, but a birth of *nature*, and naturall descent is only understood: Men of no other then a carnall title persecuted *then*, men that are thus, and no otherwise intitled to the number of the people of God take the same wayes *now*: Both branches of the distinction are therefore still with Christians.

For the latter, namely that which fully answers to the circumcision of the flesh we have from St *Peter*, who speaking of salvation by Baptisme puts by way of parenthesis this distinction, *Not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God*: where, *putting away the filth of the flesh* is the same with the *Circumcision of the flesh*, and *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, is the same with the *circumcision of the heart*. This distinction is therefore ill applyed, when that which is *outward* and of the *flesh* is only applied to *Iewes*, and that which is *inward*, and of the *heart* only unto *Christians*. The Jewes had that which was *inward*, and of the *heart*, as well as *we*; and we have that which is *outward* and of the *flesh* as well as *they*: Such doctrine will conclude the whole body of the Jewes without exception under *condemnation*, as having *no holinesse inward* or *spirituall*; and all *Christians* in a like generality in the state of *salvation*, as being all *inwardly holy* and *spirituall*: we shall have neither high way rocky nor thorny ground, but only good ground, good and honest hearts among us, if it be circumcision of the heart, and Israel according to the Spirit that alone denominates us Christians.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

Deut. 30. 6. Ier. 9. 26.

(5.) 5. The seed of beleeving parents under the Gospell, must be lookt upon under the member of this division in the text, the Apostles distinction is full and compleate, either they must be accounted of *the people of God* who are *relatively* and *federally* holy, as were Jewes, or else out of the number, and under the second head of *unholy* and out of *Covenant*, as were *sinners of the Gentiles*; a third cannot be assigned; the Apostles distribution may not be challenged. If it be under the first head that they are lookt upon, we have what we contend for; if under the second, then the heavy doome of *sinners, Gentiles, Aliens* is theirs; they are then *without Christ, without hope, without God in the world*, which will be heavy and unwelcome tidings to tender parents, that they bring not forth children (as the Jewes did) *to God*, but to *the god of this world*; that *God* doth not say of them (but *Satan* may) *my children*, leaving them in no better condition, then the seed of the *Heathen, Pagans, Turks, Infidels*, as is freely confessed by some. And what condition that is, we may learne from the Prophets *David* and *Ieremy*, *Powre out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and the families that call not upon thy name*. The whole of their flocke, for ought in Scripture appeares, have no other portion.

Ephes. 2. 12.

Ier 10. 25. Psal. 79. 6.

(6.) 6. We have the Apostles authority expressely affirming, that this *birthright priviledge of Covenant-holinesse* still appertaines to the seed of beleevers, where either of the parents are beleeving; *The unbeleeving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbeleeving wife is sanctified in the husband, else were your children uncleane, but now are they holy*. The whole seed therefore is to

1 Co. 7. 14.

be

be accounted in the number of those that are holy (which in the text is the condition of the Jewes) and not among uncleane, which here the Apostle calleth, sinners of the Gentiles. *A birth-priviledge of holinesse* therefore still remaines.

Here it is replyed that by *holinesse* in this place is meant *legitimation*, by *uncleanenesse* is understood *bastardy*: so that the meaning of the Apostle is, else were your children *spurious*, or *a bastardbrood*, but now they are *legitimate*, as borne in *wedlocke*. The mariage is sanctified in respect of issue, not for *covenant holinesse*, so as to put them into the number of an holy people, but to *legitimize* them, and to take the infamy of *bastardy* away from them. Obj.

By way of answer I would make these demands; First, Whether they will give the like interpretation of this text in hand, which is every way paralell, and answers in either of the branches? Doth the Apostle here meane, *wee that are by birth legitimate, and not bastards of the Gentiles*; Phrases thus paralel from one pen, will hardly admit interpretations so different. Quæres.

Secondly, Whether ever they read in Scripture, or any other Author these two opposite Epithites, *uncleane* and *holy*, in such a sense or meaning, that holy should be legitimate, and uncleane spurious or bastardly? In men births uncleanenesse is indeed *the parents fame*, but I never read or heard that it was *the childs Epithite*? Singular opinions put men upon singular interpretations. 2.

Thirdly, Whether it had been a bastard birth, if neither party had been of the faith? whether mariage be not valid (being no Ordinance proper to the Church, but common to all mankind) alwell among heathens as Christians? 3.

But to give more particular satisfaction, as in the negative, that it is not meant of legitimation; so also in the affirmative, that it is to be understood of a Covenant-holinesse of the children of beleevers.

For the negative, 1. A result or fruit of faith in the parent, cannot be the legitimation of the Issue: *faith* and *legitimation of Issue* being of distinct kinds. An unbeleever may have issue legitimate; and men professing the faith, with *Judah, Gilead, Uriah*, may have issue illegitimate. But holinesse in the text, is a fruit or result of faith in the parent; The unbeleeving, whether husband or wife, contributes nothing to this holinesse; all that they doe is that (being maried to a beleever) they are no impediment: They are *sanctified*, they doe not *sanctifie*. The *sanctifying* power, to the producing of the holinesse of the Issue, is made proper to the beleeving party. The unbeleever is *sanctified*, so that both together make an holy root to produce an holy branch. Answ. 1. Negative, Not legitimation.

It will be said that *beleeving* is not in the text; *the words are, that the unbeleeving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbeleeving wife is sanctified in the husband*, not in the *beleeving wife*, nor in the *beleeving husband*, so that the text makes it not any result or fruit of faith.

This weake objection hath an easie answer, It is the wife of an unbeleeving

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husband, the husband of an unbeleeving wife, when the mariage is between a beleever, and an unbeleever.

Secondly, One parent is not to be preferred before another, as to be alone, in giving that honour to the issue in which both are equall: But here one parent is preferred before another, in giving this honour of holinesse to the issue: Therefore it cannot be legitimation of the issue, in which either of both, whether beleeving or unbeleeving are equall; A *Noble-man* marrying a *meane woman*, the Issue hath *honour* from one, *legitimation* alike from both; The wife is honoured, but doth not honour: So it is here, An infidell marrying a beleever is sanctified, doth not sanctifie: the issue hath this honour of holinesse from the parent of honour, but legitimation (as all confesse) equally from either: something therefore then legitimation must needs be the meaning.

2. In the Affirmative but Covenant-holinesse.

For the affirmative, that it is meant of *Covenant-holinesse*, That interpretation which here directly answers, that which in all reason was the *Quæstion or scruple* wherein the *Corinthians* in their letter to the Apostle desired resolution, That *exactly answers each branch of the text, and runs full parallel with other places of Scripture*, that must needs be taken for the interpretation. But this interpretation of *Covenant holinesse* is such that answers their *scruple*, exactly agrees with *each branch of the text*, and runs *full parallel with other places of Scripture*. This therefore cannot be denied to be the genuine and full interpretation of the place.

It was their scruple.

For the first; making it their *scruple* whether they might continue their marriage society with one out of the Covenant of God, they could not but *scruple* what should become of their *issue*, whether they were to be accounted as they themselves, of the number of the people of God, or to be excluded from them with their unbeleeving parent; especially seeing in *Ezraes* time, those that married *strange wives* were enjoyned to put them away, and such *as were borne of them*; and in *Nehemiah's* time the Issue is branded as *of a mixt and mongrell kind* that were so descended: which is also further strengthned by the Priests answer to the several cases of conscience, by Gods appointment propounded by *Haggai* the Prophet, *If one beare holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oyle, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the Priest answered and said, No.* The touch of an uncleane thing by a cleane, doth not sanctifie it, as the cases there resolved: Againe, *If one that is uncleane by a dead body, touch any of these shall it be uncleane? And the Priest answered and said, it shall be uncleane.* The touch of a cleane thing by an uncleane doth pollute it, as is there resolved likewise; This might justly occasion the *Corinthians* feare, that they and their issue might be polluted by society with this uncleane party, and thus the uncleane party or their issue, could not by them be sanctified. And the Apostle returning answer to both (not only to their continuance in marriage-fellowship, but also to that which concernes their issue,) evidently manifests that their scruple was alike in both.

Ezra 10.3. *Nehe.* 13.24.

Hag. 2.12.

Vers. 13.

It answers the text.

For the second; that it fully agrees with the circumstances of the text:

Here

Here is a *couple* joyned in marriage, one of them *holy*, of the people of God; the other *unclean*, a sinner of the Gentiles, and a stranger to them; the Issue must take after the one, and the answer (as concerning the Issue) is fitted to both; To the *unbeleeving negatively*, through sanctification in the beleeving partie they are not *uncleane*; to the *beleever affirmatively*, they are *holy*.

For the last: that it runnes paralell with other places of Scripture, this text is an abundant witnesse: The people of God are still thus honoured for *an holy nation, an holy people, a people of holinesse*: Men out of Covenant still branded, as *uncleane*, *dogs*, *sinners*, and the like appellations: This Scripture holds therefore firme for proofe of the assertion, That Christians have their Birth-right Priviledge, that they transmit a Covenant-Holinesse to their Issue, even to their whole posterity.

Its paralell to other Scriptures.
1 *Pet.* 2, 9.
Deut. 14. 1, 2.
Isai. 63. 18.
Matth. 15. 16.

Neither is it to purpose to object, that contradictions here are joyned to produce one and the same effect, An *holy* and *unholy* person to bring forth *holy Issue*: This was the doubt which the Corinthians objected, and the Apostle solves; seeing the unbeleever, whether husband or wife, is sanctified; so that they joyntly make one Root for to bring forth an holy branch.

Object.
Answ.

And thus it was (though the contrary be objected) in the time of the Law, one parent being within the Covenant, the childe was *circumcised*; And therefore *Paul* circumcising *Timothy*, whose father was *a Greeke*, the reason given is, that his *Mother was a Iewesse*: And the Example of putting away of those that were borne of strange wives from *Ezra* 10. is strangely by some here objected, seeing the wives themselves were there put away, and here the Apostle (they know) orders otherwise: If they see that St *Pauls* rule accords not in the one, how is there a necessity that it should accord in the other? Something there was in that Example speciall and extraordinary, as there was in *Mordecai's* not bowing *the knee to Haman*: whether it were that now they were anew (as it were) to forme their Church, upon their return from *Babylon*; and were not willing to admit such a mixture, especially so many offending, as to make a considerable partie: or whether the Nations with whom they had joyned themselves were of those particularly forbidden them, *Deut.* 7. or under any speciall curse as *Amalek* was, which some conceive was the reason that *Mordecai* refused to give that honour to *Haman* an *Amalekite*: Certain it is that it agrees not with other presidents; we have examples of Marriages not a few with Heathens, which though it was their sin, yet there is no sentence of nullitie passed, nor were the wives or Issue rejected: And the Corinthians case was yet fairer, their Marriage was without sin, seeing they had not elsewhere to joyne themselves in marriage, being then both parties heathens, and one partie being converted, the marriage by the Apostles sentence still holds, and the Issue to be reckoned with the beleeving parent.

Object.
Answ.
Acts 16. 1.

Neither is here that which is proper to regeneration, given (as some object) to *naturall generation*:

Object.

1. It was so with the Iewes, as is confessed, they had this *Birth-priviledge of Covenant-Holinsse*, and yet that which was proper to Regeneration, was

Answ.

not then given to naturall generation, either of both births here from God, and among the people of God their proper right.

2. The Holineſſe which we here maintaine is no fruit of *Nature*, (ſo it could not have been proper to the Iewy, but common to the Gentile) but from the Covenant *of free grace*, to all in the faith and their ſeed: Regeneration workes *gratious qualifications*, 1 *Iohn* 5.4. This birth-right only entitles to *outward priviledges*: Regeneration therefore is not at all here *wronged*, nor naturall generation over-highly *advanced*: let thoſe that frame the objection take heed leſt themſelves run upon this Rock, denying all corruption of nature, or birth-ſin, they make Regeneration of no uſe. If all were right in the firſt birth there needed not another to follow, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes of Covenants, ſo I may ſay of births: *If the firſt had been faultleſſe, there ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond.*

Heb. 8.7.

Conſectary. 1. Of Infants Baptiſme by neceſſary inference.

Hence it neceſſarily followes by way of *Conſectary*, that the infants of Chriſtian parents are debarred of their right, if they be not in infancie *tendered* and *admitted* unto the Ordinance of *Baptiſme*: They are *God's*, and we muſt render them to *God*: *Chriſt* hath intereſt in them, they muſt therefore be dedicated to him: They are of the number of thoſe that are *holy*, and therefore they are to be received and inrolled in the *number*; *Baptiſme* is a diſtinguiſhing note, between the people of God, and thoſe who are ſtrangers from him; They are His, and they muſt therefore be thus diſtinguiſhed. The force of this conſequence the adverſaries doe no leſſe then acknowledge, forcing the Scriptures which evidently evince this Covenant-Holineſſe, unto ſtrained interpretations, on purpoſe to avoid it: upon this ground *infants* under the lawy were *circumciſed*, and upon the ſame infants now are to be baptized: ſo that it is not barely the *Analogy* betweene *Circumciſion* and *Baptiſme*, by which we inforce the baptiſme of infants, but the grounds of both *Circumciſion* and *Baptiſme*: What is objected againſt one concludes againſt both; *Circumciſion* and *Baptiſme* are therefore by the Apoſtle promiſcuouſly taken; there being the ſame principall and maine end of both. What can Baptiſme ſigne and ſeale but *the righteouſneſſe of faith*? This, circumciſion did ſigne and ſeale to *Abraham* and his poſteritie. Reade that which the Apoſtle obſerves of *Abrahams* circumciſion, and compare it with the hiſtory of the Eunuches Baptiſme, and ſee where you can finde them differ. *Faith was reckoned unto Abraham for righteouſneſſe*: *How was it reckoned* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in circumciſion or in uncircumciſion; not in circumciſion but in uncircumciſion. And he received the ſigne of circumciſion a ſeale of the righteouſneſſe of faith, which he had yet being uncircumciſed.* The Eunuch on his journey with *Philip*, comming to a certain *water* ſaith, See here is *water*, what doth hinder me to be *baptized*? And *Philip* ſaid, *If thou beleeveſt with all thine heart thou maiſt.* And he anſwered and ſaid, *I beleeve that Ieſus Chriſt is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to ſtand ſtill, and they went down both into the water, and he baptized him.* May we not make the ſame obſervation of this Baptiſme, as the Apoſtle doth on *Abrahams* circumciſion? He received the *ſigne of Baptiſme, a ſeale of the righteouſneſſe of the faith, which he had being yet unbaptized*: So that the main end and uſe is the ſame in both: All ap-

Col. 2.11, 12.

Rom. 4.11.

Rom. 4 9, 10, 11

Act. 8.36, 37, 38.

pertaining

pertaining to this faith were *circumcised, and their seed.* All appertaining to this faith are to be *baptized, and their seed.* Hence it is that S^t. *Peter* on this ground of the Promise made to beleevers and their seed, encourages his Converts unto Baptisme, *Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the Name of Iesus Christ, for the remission of sinnes, and ye shall receive the holy Ghost, for the promise is made to you and your children, and to all that are afarre off, even as many as the Lord your God shall call.* Whence I reason, in the same latitude as the promise is laid downe, the encouragement is also urged, to receive the signe and seale of it. But the promise is laid downe in that latitude, to comprehend Converts and their seed, Converts therefore and their seed are to be baptized. Can there be any reason given, why the seed should be mentioned in the Motive or Encouragement to receive Baptisme, if they were to be excluded from Baptisme? Accordingly when an housholder was baptized, all the household were baptized, *He and all his*, Acts 16.15.ver.33.

Strengthened by Scriptures. 1. *Acts* 2.38,39.

Acts 16.15. *Vers.*33. 1 *Cor.*1.16.

Will it be said that this promise in this latitude is there tendered onely to the Jewes?

Object.

To this I reply. First, that then *Iewes* receiving Christ (as these now did and were here encouraged) still enjoy this birth-priviledge, which being yeelded to them cannot be denied to the *Gentiles* receiving the faith, without a singular *schisme between Iew and Gentile.* They that murmured that their *widowes* were *neglected*, would soone have murmured when their *seed* had been *excluded.* And secondly, I affirme that the Gentiles are equally there included with the Jewes in the promise, as concerning the seed, as the Copulative particle (*and*) fully evinceth, it couples not one peece onely but the whole of the promise.

Answ.

Acts 6.1.

There is yet an objection that seemes to take with more colour; That this promise had reference to the *gift of the holy Ghost*, promised by *Ioel* the Prophet, here by the Apostle, *ver.*17. &c. mentioned, and the Apostle here speaking of the promise to his Converts and their children, onely makes good what he had said, that they should receive the *holy Ghost*, and that by authorizie of the Prophet. *Ioel* promises that their sonnes and their daughters shall prophecie, and this is that promise which is here tendered by the Apostle to them and their children.

Object.

I answer: First, the extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost in this visible way, cannot be the promise here by S^t. *Peter* mentioned, seeing it is enlarged to all that are *afarre off, even to as many as the Lord shall call.* But all these have not the holy Ghost in that way extraordinary, nor any promise of it: That is a *Baptisme* proper to those *primitive Saints*, that *Baptisme with the holy Ghost and with fire*, wherewith they were told that they should *be baptized not many dayes after.*

Answ.

*Matt.*3.11. *Acts* 1.5.

Secondly, however the promise be interpreted so as to belong to all that are beleevers, *and call on the Name of the Lord*, as there followes, yet that promise is on condition of their Baptisme. The *meanes* are to be used in reference to the *end*: *Baptisme* is the *meanes*, receiving of the *holy Ghost*, (there specified) is the *end*: And the Apostle confirming them in the promise of the end, doth likewise encourage them to the use of the meanes, in Baptisme

to expect the gift of the Spirit; and so (according to this interpretation) that place is an encouragement to Baptisme; The promise is the fittest encouragement to the signe and seale of the promise: Baptisme is the signe and seale to which they are here encouraged, and in that latitude, as they had formerly known the command of Circumcision.

Object. And the Evasion is too weake to say that *children* here are the same with *sonnes and daughters* mentioned from the Prophet, and therefore to be meant of none but such that are of growth, and capable of the gift of prophecy.

Answ. The Apostle urgeth the promise in the way as in the Scriptures it is delivered, which is to men and their posterity, to them and theirs, so God promises to be a God in Covenant to *His, and their seed*, which people in Covenant have a promise also from him of the Spirit, and this the Apostle holds out to draw them on to this seale of the Covenant, to accept Baptisme on the same termes that *Abraham* did circumcision.

Secondly, it is without reason to beleeve that the Apostle should instance in one peece of the distribution of the Prophet there, and to leave out the rest, to put in alone *sonnes and daughters*, when we have in the text *young men, old men, servants and hand-maids.*

Thirdly, *Children* here are mentioned under a promise to the *parents*, *To you and your children is the promise made*, but not so in *Ioel*, nor in the quotation of the Apostle: That Scripture hath onely an Enumeration of the severall sorts and conditions of people in any nation, on all which the Spirit is promised, without any addresse made to the parents of those sonnes and daughters, more then to the Masters of those servants and hand-maids: not the sonnes and daughters of *their flesh*, but the sonnes and daughters of *the Nation*, a language usuall in our ordinary expressions, speaking of men of any sort or condition, as *your Lawyers, your Merchants*, &c. so here, *your sonnes, your daughters, your old men, your young men*, &c.

2. For further confirmation: Those whom *Christ receives* the *Church* may not *refuse*; The *Church* consists of those that visibly appeare to be *Christs*. But *Christ* admits children, *little children*, in their infancy, such that he takes *into his armes*, *Suffer little children to come to me and forbid them not*; who dare be so *rigid* when Christ is thus *candid?*

Matth. 19.4. *Matth.* 15.14. *Mar.* 10.14. *Luk.* 18.16.

The *Kingdome of Heaven* receives them, the *Church* therefore may not exclude them: The *Church* receives those whom *glory* receives, There were *daily added to the Church such as should be saved*: But the Kingdome of Heaven receives little children, *Of such is the Kingdome of Heaven.*

Acts 2.47.

Object. Let none say that the Kingdome of Heaven is of *such* (that is) of those that are graced with such qualities, that are *humble and meeke* as little children are. That may be elsewhere Christs way of *instruction*, it cannot be here his *argumentation.*

First, there is no manner of consequence in the argument thus pressed: Let little ones in infancie come to me, for though not they, yet such as they, others qualified like them, in some select properties resembling them shall go to Heaven.

Secondly, Upon the same ground, *Sheepe, Doves, Vine-branches*, might have

have been brought to him, for such as resemble them, in like select properties, shall be received into the kingdom of Heaven: And Christ might have drawne an apt a similitude from them.

Thirdly, that which the Disciples took to be an impediment of force to hinder infants, and a just ground of rebuke of those that brought them, is that which Christ understands in this reproofe of the Disciples, and admission of their infants. But it was their want of growth, their littlenesse which the Disciples took to be a just impediment; and which occasioned their reproofe; So that the particle (*such*) hath direct reference to the *quantity* (as I may say) not to the *quality* of these infants, to their *infant stature*, not to their *meekenesse or humility*: And so it is referred elsewhere expressely by our Saviour himselfe, *Whosoever shall receive one such little child*; The word is the same *here* and *there*, it respects *littlenesse* therefore and not *meekenesse*: The whole text may be thus fitly paraphrased, *Trouble not our Master with such as these* (say the Disciples) *there is no use of their coming, they need not his cure, and they are not capable of his instruction; They have no infirmity to be healed, no capacity to be taught, it is fit for men of abler parts, not for infants to make their addresse to him: Let them come* (saith our Saviour) *and let not their infant-age exclude them, how little soever they are capeable of the kingdome of Heaven.* Mat. 18. 5.

Having the *substance and thing signified* in baptisme they may not be denied the *signe*: This is the Apostles way of dispute, *Acts* 10. 47. And to deny them to have the thing signified in baptisme is an assertion of odious consequence: *Christ is the thing signified* in baptisme as in all other Sacraments, *Gal.* 3. 27, *&c.* And denying them *Christ*, you either exclude them from *salvation* with the *Papists*, or else exempt them from *Originall sinne* with the *Pelagians*: The *Anabaptists* of the present age are well aware that the consequence can be no other; they well see that all that joyne in this Tenent, saile between those *rockes*, either to affirme, *that infants die in their pollution and perish in their birth-sin*; or else to deny *this originall pollution or any birth-sin at all*; the latter of the two they therefore generally choose; judging it more faire to deny infants sinne, then to affirme their condemnation; joyning hands with *Pelagians*, an heresie of old and *forepast dayes*, rather then with *Papists* the *present yoke and scourge of Christians*: And taking with these, to deny *originall sinne*, they straight fall upon *universall grace*, *freedome of will in things spirituall*: *The free election of God* they overthrow, leaving it in our power to *make choyce of Christ*, and not *Christ to make choyce of us*: And so *Popery* is no sooner left, but it is againe found, they joyne hands with it as soone as they have left it: And all such who have not yet waded so deepe, but now begin to see this way, I wish them to weigh with themselves what other way they can find to make children uncapeable of Baptisme, unlesse they also make good such *originall purity* that they stand not *in need of Christ*, or else be content to yeeld that they perish in their sinne without Christ; withall sadly taking to heart whether the *Genius* of this doctrine leades, plunging almost all that give it entertainement into so many damnable and pernicious errours, such as themselves upon the first envy abominate: By Argument 2.

abominate: If they think that they can make it good in this more innocent way, keeping their judgements without taint of the errours mentioned, they see more then all the Orthodox Churches, whom in this they have left, and the whole body of those to whom they beginne to joyne themselves: The Churches whom they have left, will be afraid to own them, and the Sect to whom in this they are joyned will much more abominate and reject them; The deniall *of birth-sinne* is the readiest way to the deniall *of birth holinesse*; and no other way to be taken, but by prejudging the salvation of them that dye as soone as borne, that dye before yeares of ability to make profession of the faith of Christ Jesus. But as the Apostle pressing the dangerous and odious consequences that follow upon the deniall of the *resurrection of Christ* (which was his *Medium* to assert the *Resurrection of the dead*) takes off all with this affirmation *that Christ is risen from the dead*; So we pressing the danger of denyall Infants part and portion in Christ, (our *Medium to prove their interest in baptisme*) may take off all with the like affirmation, That *Infants have their portion in Christ*. Infancy excludes not from their right to him and interest in him, so that we need to run neither of these straits, to exempt them from *pollution*, or exclude them from *salvation*: which easily may be made good: They are accepted and highly honoured of God, as we see in the text recited, and further in our Saviours words, *Mat.* 18.5,6. But it is *in the beloved, in Christ, that we are accepted*: The voice from Heaven witnesseth that *in him God is well pleased*: Deny infants *Christ*, and *God* is alike pleased with them as with the *brood of Cockatrices, and the seed of Serpents*. Much sure is in those words of our Saviour Christ, *Who so shall receive one such little child in my name, receives me*: How doe we receive Christ in receiving them, if they belong not to Christ, if they be not members of, if they have no interest in Christ: For such as say that they would baptize an infant, if any could make it good that he were in Christ Jesus, they might as well say in the same manner to Christ, that they would receive that little one or such a little one, incase it could be made good that they were of his members, and elect ones.

1 *Cor.* 15.20.

Ephes. 5.1,6. *Mat.* 3.17.

Mat. 18.5.

Object. Nor let it be objected; That *Infants* then are not to be denied the *Lords Supper*, but are to be received to his *table*, seeing *Christ* is the *thing signified* in that Sacrament; as in *Baptisme*.

Answ. The difference (as all may see) is wide: In this Sacrament Infants are passive, and so capeable of this honour, to be taken in; In the other we are active, and Infants for that reason are incapeable: They are not in capacity to performe so much as that which is *outwardly sacramentall*: They cannot, according to the Institution *take and eat*, much lesse can they *doe it in remembrance of Christ*: The very phrase (*circumcised, baptised*) is enough to difference from eating with bitter herbes, *&c.* as at the Passeover, from communicating as at the Lords table, Infants are fit subjects for the one, men of growth are only fit subjects for the other: One to presse on this objection furnisheth us with a similitude, *Suppose* (saith he) *a King for some speciall service wherein the honour of himselfe and safety of his kingdome is much concerned, should by Commission ordaine or command a Sheriffe upon paine of death, to*

raise

raise for his service ten thousand men, the most able in his County; and his Sheriffe, finding the said number of children about six moneths old, should present them to the King at the very instant of battaile, as though he had thereby performed the Kings command: Would this be taken for a sufficient performance of his duty?

But suppose that the *King* should appoint all his *free-borne subjects* to be *inrolled*, and a *list* taken of their *Names*, who in time might *act* in their places for his honour, and enjoy *Immunities as his subjects*, might not Infants then goe in the number? So it is here, *Baptisme* is the initiating ordinance, The subjects of Heaven are here inrolled, their names may therefore be taken as *subjects*, though they cannot yet act as *souldiers*: They are here intitled to all the Immunities of this kingdome, yet orderly as they shall be of capacity and fitnesse to make use of them.

But their want of *faith* is challenged as an impediment to *Baptisme*: When the *Eunuch* desired *Baptisme*, we know the answer that he had: *If thou beleevest with all thine heart thou maist*: And *Calvinists* denying actuall faith to be found in Infants, their Adversaries the *Lutherans* come in with their argument *ad hominem*, making against us (say they) though not against the thing it selfe: Every Sacrament without faith in him that uses it is a vaine Ceremony, But the Baptisme of Infants is a Sacrament without the faith of him that useth it. Object.

A speech directed to a man of yeares and without any title to the Covenant (other then his actuall faith did confer upon him) is ill applyed to Infants within Covenant that otherwise have title to it. Answ. 1.

This exception carries equall strength against Infants circumcision: There is no more faith in the *Infants of Iewes* then there is in the *Infants of Christians*; And faith is no lesse necessary in the *circumcised* then in the *baptized*: There was an equall necessity of the ingrediency of faith in every one in that age, as in this, yea in the ages more ancient then that of circumcision, as appeares by the Apostles argument, *Heb.* 11. 6.

Their capacity to receive the *signe*, answers their capacity to receive the *thing signified*, they are *passive* in the receiving of Christ and any interest in him: and so also they are, (and circumcised Infants were) in taking the signe. And so the *Lutheran proposition* being understood of any thing wherein we are active is a truth, but applied to Infants uncapable of action in the Sacrament where they are only passive, it is to be denied.

If Infants have the *like gift* intitling to, and interesting in the priviledge of baptisme with *beleevers*, then they *withstand God* who deny their baptisme: This is the Apostles argument brought for his own defence, which I wish were more seriously considered: And let it not be objected that the *gift* there specified is a *gift extraordinary*, peculiar to those times: It is enough to make the argument of force, that it is alike in them with that which now intitles growne beleevers: Now the want of those gifts extraordinary, doth not disable grown beleevers: The want of these doth not then disable Infants. *Acts* 11. 17.

And that they have the *like gift*, intitling to, and interesting in the Sacra-

ment of baptisme is plaine: *A Covenant-holinesse unquestionable: Inherent qualitative holinesse hopefull*, is a like gift to that which growne beleevers are able to produce: But *Infants* have *Covenant-holinesse unquestionable, inherent qualitative holinesse hopefull*; A beleever by the profession of his faith is able to make good his title to the outward Covenant, and so can the beleeving parent the title of his Infant: A beleever can make good such a title to the inward Covenant, that none can say *thou hast no part or portion in this thing*: And because it cannot be denied (though absolutely and infallibly it be not affirmed) it is to be presumed: This a beleeving parent can make good in the behalfe of his Infant, and this is sufficient, this is alike.

Object. But it will yet be said, An *institution* is wanting, we have no *precept*, we have no *president* of the baptizing of Infants: The institution is, *Mat.28.19.* *Goe teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.* We must baptize those whom by *teaching* we have *discipled*: so the word signifieth.

I answer, First, That which hath beene said doth conclude that they are within the verge of an institution, being such that have so full title: I have heard one of the most learned and reverend that ever I knew or heard of that was of that way more then once professe with no small solemnity, that *if he knew an Infant to be sanctified as he acknowledged* John Baptist *was, such a one he would baptize*: And that *the particular infants whom Christ was seene for to blesse might have beene baptized*: Those then that are thus intitled, through want of an institution are not to be excluded, and how farre and fully Infants of beleeving parents are intitled we have heard.

2. The place quoted hath not in it the *Institution* of that Sacrament: *Baptisme* was appointed of *God* before those words were uttered; He that spoke them was *himselfe before baptized*; They to whom they were spoken had *baptized others*; It is only an enlargement of their Commission for the exercise of their Ministery, being before confined unto one Nation, now it is enlarged to all Nations. *Mat.3.16. Ioh 4.6. Mat.10.5.*

3. The words there comprize infants, they are no more excluded then men of yeares, serving to make up a Nation as well as parents: The Infants of *Niniveh* did make a considerable party of the City of *Niniveh*; The Infants of any Nation make up a part of the Nation; and the Nation where they came was to be discipled, And that Infants are here comprehended further appeares by this argument.

* In the same sense and latitude as *Nation* was taken in respect of the Covenant of God, when *the Covenant, and Covenant-initiating-Sacrament* was restrained to that one only Nation, where their Commission was first limited: In the same sense it is to be taken (unlesse the text expresse the contrary) now the Commission is enlarged.

This cannot be denied of any that will have the Apostles to be able to know Christs meaning by his words in this enlarged Commission.

But *Nation*, then as is confessed did comprehend all in the *Nation* in respect of the Covenant, and nothing is expressed in the text to the contrary, therefore it is to be taken in that latitude, to comprehend Infants.

Will it be said, that an exception of Infants is implied, in that all of the

Nation,

* This argument hath strength fro. that of the Apostle, *Act.3.25.* As it was with the kindred of *Abraham* in respect of covenant-holinesse, so it is with all kindreds of the earth, they ioinly make one party in the Covenant: But infants of *Abrahams* kindred were in the Covenant, and of the nation in respect of Covenant-blessednesse. *Ergo, &c.* Object.

Nation must be discipled before they be baptized, but *Infants* are not capable of being discipled, and so they are made uncapable of Baptisme.

I answer, 1. Here is rather implyed that they are of capacitie to be Disciples, in that Christ sends *to disciple Nations*, and they serve to make up the *nation*. Answ. 1.

2. It is the way of the Scripture, speaking of an universality of a people in a land, expressely to except infants, in case they be to be excepted: As we see in the judgement that befell Israel in the wildernesse *to the cutting off* of those that came out of the land of Egypt. And in the Covenant entred by the body of the *Nation of all degrees and sexes* at their returne from Babylon, and an exception could be no where more usefull and necessary then here, to let us know that it is otherwise with Gentiles in this particular then it was with the Iewes, that the Nations where their Commission is thus enlarged were herein differenced from the Nation to which their Ministerie was first limisted. 2. Numb. 14.31. Nehem. 10.28.

3. Let that text of the Prophet be well weighed, where speaking by the spirit of prophecy of the rejection of the Jewes, and the glorious call of the Gentiles in their stead, in that ample way as it is there set out hath these words, *Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sonnes in their armes: and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.* If there were but such an hint as that by way of propheſy to have left them behind, we should from some have heard of it with a noise. Isai. 49.22.

4. In the Lord *Christs Dialect*, who is best able to expresse his own meaning, they are *Disciples*, To *belong to Christ* is to be a *Disciple of Christ*, This is plaine from our Saviours owne mouth, comparing his words recorded in *Matthew* and *Mark*, *To give a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple*, it is in the one; *To give a cup of water to drink in my Name, because ye belong to me*, it is in the other: To *belong to Christ*, to be a *Disciple of Christ*, and to beare *the Name of Christ* is one and the same thing with our Saviour. Now that Infants are of the number of those who as *Disciples* in Christs account doe *belong unto him*, and beare *his Name*, is yet further plain by another text of St *Matthew*, where Christ setting a *little childe* in the middest of his hearers saith, *Who so shall receive one such little child in my Name, receiveth me*. By all which it appeares, that which is done to *Infants* is done to *Disciples*, hath a glorious *reward* as done to *Disciples*; *Infants* therfore *are Disciples of Christ, are of those that doe belong unto him*, and beare *his Name*: who then is not afraid to *refuse* them who will *receive* Christ? who will not baptize them that is willing to baptize Disciples in the Name of Christ? Matth. 10.42. Mar. 9.41. Matth. 18.5.

For *Examples*, which they say we want of the Baptisme of Infants:

1. I answere, first, we walke by *Rule* rather then *President*, the Rule hath been examined.

2. Examples are often very rare, where the rule is unquestionable, and undeniable, we have no Example of any triall of the *suspect wife* by the *water of jealousie*. For *womens right to the Lords Supper* we have no particular in-

ſtitution; no particular *Preſident* more then for this of Infants Baptiſme.

3. We have Examples not to be contemned of the *Baptiſme* of whole *houſholds*, and whether *Infants* were there or no, as it is not certaine (though probable) ſo it is not materiall: The *Preſident* is an *Houſhold*, he that followes the *Preſident* muſt baptize *houſholds*. It appeares not that any wife was there, yet he that followes the Preſident in baptizing of houſholds, muſt baptize wives, and ſo (I may ſay) ſervants, if they be of the houſhold.

Object. Objections are yet brought from humane authoritie, which I have reſerved to the laſt, as accounting them the leaſt: And if this diſpute might this way be determined, that plurality of votes might carry it: the adverſaries know how it would fare with them in it.

Origen is vouched calling *it a ceremonie or tradition of the Church: Hom. 8. in Levit.* in Epiſt. ad *Rom. lib. 5. Gregorie* alſo *in decret. diſtinct. de conſe.*

Anſw. One of thoſe *traditions* which the *Apoſtle* charged the *Theſſalonians to keep*, *2 Theſſ.* 2. 15. which I ſpeake not by gueſſe, but we have it in the ſame Epiſtle (*cap.* 6.) from his own mouth, *The Church* (ſaith he) *received Baptiſme of Infants from the Apoſtles:* The greateſt points of Faith (as is well known) are ordinarily called by the name of traditions by the Antients. Traditions being onely ſuch things that are delivered from one to another, they are as well written as unwritten; And we have cauſe willingly to embrace this teſtimonie, *Origen* lived 226. yeares after Chriſt, in the beginning of the *Alſted. Chronol.* *third Century*, he cals it a *tradition* of the Church, it was therefore delivered over to the Church in his time, and of antient uſe before him.

Auſtin cals it a *cuſtome of the Church: de Baptiſ. contra Donat. lib. 4. cap. 23.*

Anſw. And ſo doe I alſo call it, and the obſerving of the firſt day of the weeke, the impoſition of hands on Church-officers, the giving of the Lords Supper to men of growth is a cuſtome of the Church likewiſe.

Eraſmus ſaith *they are not to be condemned that doubt whether the Baptiſme of Infants were ordained by the Apoſtles: Lib. 4. de ratione Concio.*

Anſw. His words evidently imply that it was their errour, and it ſeemes his thoughts were other of thoſe who openly did oppoſe it, and refuſe it.

Papiſts openly proſeſſe that the Baptiſme of Infants is grounded upon tradition, and not upon Scripture: for which *Eckius* and *Bellarmine* are brought in.

Anſw. This they doe not really and cordially but for their owne advantage, to make good unwritten traditions againſt Proteſtant adverſaries; They know that we maintaine Baptiſme of Infants, and diſclaime theſe traditions, and if Baptiſme of infants doe appeare to be one, then they have us building what we have deſtroyed. *Bellar.* indeed (in his book *de Verbo Dei*) ſtanding for unwritten traditions as a part of the Word of God will have Baptiſme of infants to be one, but when he diſputes for Baptiſme of Infants againſt Anabaptiſts, then he can heape up texts of Scripture, *de ſacra Baptiſ. cap.* 8. So alſo *cap.* 9. in the entrance of it, *Satis aperte colligitur ex Scripturis*, the Baptiſme of Infants is evidently enough gathered from Scriptures: The like fetch of his I could ſhew in other particulars.

It appeares to be forced on the people by authority of Councels, out of the Councell of *Milevitanum*, this Canon is urged, *It is alſo our will that thoſe that*

that will not that children be baptized that are new borne from their mothers wombe, be excommunicate.

So in the *Nicene Councell* it was decreed that we ſhould beleeve that there is one God Maker of all things viſible and inviſible; The greateſt points of faith (we know) under *Anathema's* are decreed in Councels. This Councell was in the fifth Century, 200 yeares after *Origen*, who ſtiles Baptiſme of Infants (as we have heard) a tradition of the Church in his dayes. And *Auſtin* who was not onely preſent, but (as is ſaid) Preſident of that Councell, returning anſwer to thoſe that deſire divine authority for the Baptiſme of Infants, for ſatisfaction firſt produceth that rule, *Quod univerſa tenet Eccleſia, nec Conciliis inſtitutum, ſed ſemper retentum eſt, non niſi authoritate Apoſtolica traditum, rectiſſimè creditur. That which the whole Church holds, and was not ordained by any Councels, but hath ever been held, that is rightly beleeved to be by Apoſtolicall authoritie.* This he takes to be ſufficient, yet for more full ſatisfaction, he goes on to diſpute for it from the Scriptures, whence we ſee what himſelfe meanes by the cuſtome of the Church; And by what authoritie that Councell did appoint the Baptiſme of Infants. *Auguſtinus de Bapt. contra Donatiſt. lib. 4o. cap. 24. ad initium.* *Anſw.*

By all this that hath been ſaid it more fully appeares what regard is to be given to that which is cited out of *Luther* and *Caſſander*, concerning the time that Baptiſme of Infants was brought into the Church: *Luther* (as it is ſaid) affirmes that it came into the Church a thouſand yeares before his time, which muſt be one hundred yeares after *Auſtin*, and three hundred yeares after *Origen*. *Caſſander* affirmes that it was brought in three hundred yeares after Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which muſt be an hundred yeares after *Origen* at leaſt. If this had been true, theſe fathers muſt have ſaid as St *Paul* of contentions, *We have no ſuch cuſtome, neither the Church of God*, and could not have ſaid that it was a cuſtome or tradition of the Church, *Origen* then had never knowne it, and *Auſtin* might have called it an innovation. 1 Cor. 11. 16.

Thoſe conjectures of *Tuicencis* & *Iohannes Bohemius* concerning the occaſion of the firſt in-let of Infants Baptiſme into the Church fals to the ground likewiſe, when men heare of a beginning they will be bold to aſſigne ſome reaſon of it, If my conjecture may be heeded, I ſuppoſe it was in ſome diſ-uſe with many not long after the Apoſtles times, and that by reaſon of the ſuperſtitious conceit that too ſoon prevailed of the *opus operatum* in Baptiſme, that it cleanſes all ſinnes that are paſt whether originall or actuall. And therefore many that were converted at ripe yeares deferred their Baptiſme as neere the houre of death as might be, to have all their ſinnes cleanſed by that water, againſt which cuſtome *Bellarmine* at large diſputes by reaſon of the abſolute neceſſity of Baptiſme, though both his grounds and theirs are on a falſe bottome: May we not then beleeve that parents upon the ſame ground did put off the Baptiſme of their children, and after did re-aſſume it upon the neceſſity of it, And this is that which the authour produced, *viz. Iohannes Bohemius* ſpeaks of.

But Mr *Daniel Rogers* above all is ſtood upon, in his Treatiſe of the Sacraments he hath theſe words, *I take the Baptiſme of Infants to be one of the moſt*

reverend, generall, and uncontrolled traditions which the Church hath, and which I would no lesse doubt of then the Creed to be Apostolicall, although I confesse my selfe yet unconvinced by demonstration of Scripture for it.

Answ. I wish the Reader to consider what the adversary gaines by this testimony, It is *generall uncontrolled*, he saith, and so he knowes unwritten traditions never were, Orthodox Divines antient and moderne have ever opposed them; In gaining a peice of a witnesse such an one that hath his reasons to beleeve Baptisme of Infants to be Apostolicall, they have the Church unanimously in all successive ages their adversarie.

The consectarie enlarged. And as the *Infants* of beleeving parents are to be received to Baptisme; so no *Infants* that descend from those that make Profession of the faith of Christ are to be *refused*: Any solid reason which will lye against any (for ought can be said) may be a ground of the challenge of all: The promise made to those that professe Christ and their seed, takes in the seed of all that make profession. Some that doe not withstand, but maintaine and practise the Baptisme of Infants have found a middle way, as betweene rigid *Brownists* and *Prethyterians*, so between *Anabaptists* and (as I may say) *Pede-baptists*; All Infants they will not have to be refused, confessing them to be within the verge of the promise, yet they will not have all promiscuously received: The *parents* by solemne Covenant must first be made members of some particular congregation, and so their *Issue* is to be admitted, their children baptized, otherwise both parents and children are to be accounted as *without*, by *nature unholy*; and only the *Godly regenerate* (so farre as men can judge) no one of loose life to be admited.

But this middle way (under correction) I cannot but take to be a step out of the way, I will here dispute it no further then as it concernes this particular.

Either the *vicious and scandalous life* of such a parent, or *his non admission into Covenant in a Congregationall way* is the barre of the Infant that he is not admitted unto Baptisme, but neither of these may be a barre.

First not the vicious life of his parent.

If the ground of a childs admission to baptisme be not the faith of his *immediate parent*, but the promise made to Ancestors in the faith, whose seed he is though at the *greater distance*; Then the loose life of an immediate parent can be no barre to his baptisme: This is plaine, if *Iosiah* have no right from his father *Ammon*, yet he is not to be shut out, in case he have right from his father *David* or his father *Abraham*: And though the immediate parent *were not wronged when his child is so shut out and denied, yet such Ancestor* in distance is wronged out of whose loynes the Infant is descended: If *Phinehas* were not wronged in case *Ichabod* had been debarred, yet *Eli* yea *Aaron* had suffered. But the ground of a childs admission is the promise to Ancestors, whether at neerer or greater distance, The promise is to beleevers and their seed: Now *Iosiah* was the seed of *David*, Christ was the seed of *David*: An Ancestor at distance, and not alone immediate (where the race within the Church, may be derived in a continued succession) gives right of admission therefore unto baptisme;

2. There

2. There is nothing that can exclude the seed of him that is a beleever, as beleever is opposed to an Infidell, the seed of one that is of a dogmaticall or historicall faith: This we have before made good, and from 1 Cor. 7. 14. may be further cleared, He that is no Infidell is there a beleever whose seed is holy. But a man of a vicious life is in that sense a beleever, *Simon Magus*, *the hearers compared to the rocky ground were beleevers*, therefore a loose life will not exclude the Issue. Acts 8. 13. Luk. 8. 13.

His seed who is a member of a particular *Church society* must be admitted unto baptisme, a *Church member* and all that are his must have their priviledges: But it often falls out that men of loose lives are members as the Church of *Corinth* yeelds many proofes, Therefore vicious life excludes not the Issue. 1 Cor. 12. 20, 21, &c.

Secondly, The non-admission into Covenant is no barre in the parent.

1. It was no barre when themselves who now are members were admitted in their infancy, their parents for the most part being no members in such a way: Therefore now it is no barre though the parent be no member, but out of such Church-Covenant.

2. They who have *themselves* title to baptisme, they have power to intitle their *Infants* likewise, this can be denied by none that deny not Infants baptisme; But men never entring any such *Church-Covenant in a Congregationall way* were baptized upon just title; The *Converts of Peter*, the *Eunuch*, the *Jaylor*, &c. No one that we reade was first made a member and then baptized, but were by Baptisme made members, not respectively of any one particular Congregation, but of the Church of Christ in generall.

3. It would then be in the power of man, of three or foure (whom they say make a bottome Church) to keep an Infant at their pleasure out of Gods Covenant, to be reputed at their courtesie, either of the *dogs* or of the *children*. This may not be denied, These or the greater number of them have power of admission of members at pleasure. And some singularly eminent that way have affirmed that it is not enough that a man have *grace* to render him capable of being admitted, but he must have *expressions*: A fathers slow tongue shall now exclude his seed from this glory of admittance into the fellowship of the Saints. And when those are not judged worthy of fellowship who are not of abilities to sit in judgement with the Congregation to admit members, to passe sentence upon delinquents, to judge of doctrines, not only to elect but ordaine Pastors and Church-officers, we may easily guesse how many they exclude as without, whom Christ receives: Such a way had it been taken had deprived the Church of an *Hezekiah*, *Iosiah* and many others in their age renowned. How great a provocation to such children when once of growth to joyne with them, with whom the Church ranks them? and to oppose with the uttermost of fury such that (after the revolution of so many generations inheriting that priviledge) now doe debarre them? And how great an incouragement to joyne with such in all holinesse with whom they were honoured with these priviledges?

Some there be that subscribe these truths yet will have some caution used: The children of parents of *loose life*, yea of *excommunicate persons*, *children of*

illegitimate

illegitimate birth they say are to be baptised; but with condition that the education of such be undertaken by men pious and godly, two reasons one gives.

1. *Distinctio aliqua inter puros & impuros debet in sacris omnibus observari, ad bonorum consolationem, correctionem malorum, & omnium edificationem*, that is, Some difference ought to be put in all divine ordinances between the cleane and uncleane, for the comfort of the godly, the censure of the wicked, and the edification of all.

To which I answer, The personall impurity of the father is not transmitted to the child, and therefore the distinction of clean and uncleane, which holds betweene the parents, fals to the ground when it is applied to the Issue; Both of them have a *Covenant-holinesse* from their parents, neither of both have *holinesse qualitative* and inherent, and the children standing equally interested in the promises, we have no rule that the child should beare the fathers sin.

2. *Instituta Dei non possunt aliter ab omni pollutione conservari*, The ordinances of God can no other way be kept from blot and pollution.

I answer, Our care in the preservation of any ordinance of God may not exceed the care of God himselfe, least under that colour we make *our wisedome* to correct *Gods wisedome*, and when he admits without such limits; why should we then put barres? A raile about the Communion table for that which is taken away, one hath well motioned, such a one that would not nourish *superstition* but keepe back the *prophane*: But I know not any use of such a one about the Font-stone in a Nation professedly Christian, and enjoying ordinances that are saving, where Infants (for ought that the Church is able to discerne) are all equall; all equally holy, all equally impure: *Christians in name* transmit a Covenant-holinesse; *Christians in truth* cannot transmit holinesse inherent: If these thus borne have no right at all, I suppose they should not be admitted with any caution whatsoever. If they have any such birthright-priviledge (notwithstanding their sad discomfort in such parents) why should it be thus suspended on the curtesie of such undertakers; I would more care were taken for education of youth (of which more anon) but this I only say, that I see not how the Infants right should be detteyned, their birth-priviledge denied, till such caution be given: I conclude then that right of baptisme is as large as in any good sense the name Christian, The right of Infants is as large as is the name of Christian in the parents.

A vaine dispute there hath been among Schoolemen, how the child is saved or justified by the faith of the parent; whether by the *habit* of the parents faith, or the *act* of beleeving applied by the parent to the Infant at the time, and in the instant of baptisme? And whether it must be a *faith formed* (as they speake) *with charity*, or whether *a faith informed*, *a dead faith* would serve to the justification and salvation of the seed? whether a parent in mortall sinne may apply faith to his child to salvation? And I would know whether there be not some such thing now agitated, when such enquiry is made into the personall qualification of the parent before the child may have admittance.

admittance. But all these are meere niceties: The faith of the parent availes not directly to justification or salvation of the Infant, neither is it considered as applied to this or that child in baptisme; the parent may be dead before the child be baptized; But it is considered only as accepting the *Covenant* of Gods free grant for him and his posterity, which entitles posterity to saving ordinances, but doth not necessarily qualifie for salvation. A subject accepts a *Patent of honour* from his Prince for himselfe and posterity, this *Grant of the Prince*, and *acceptance* in the subject entitles to Nobility; And the like we say of Christianity; which evident truth takes off all difficulties, and prevents all absurdities which follow upon these Quæres:

2. Consectary, Title to all Ordinances.

It yet further here followes that *the seed of beleevers* thus by birth-right, priviledge *baptized*, have a large and full right to all the *Ordinances of God and privilledges of the Church* appertaining to members, as they shall be capable of their use, whersoever by the providence of God they are cast; only so farre excepted as the just censures of the Church upon their *personall defects and misdemeanours* shall disable them, and give Church-officers just cause to refuse them: The consequence is evident. They now visibly belong to Christ, they through him are dedicated to God, they have therefore title to all his visible ordinances: They are now of the *houshold of God*, and of the *Citizens of the Saints* orderly admitted: Scripture knowes no other admission then Baptisme: No sooner doe we heare of a convert, but we presently heare of his baptisme, no Church-covenant intervening: They have right to all the immunities of this *house*, to all the privileges of this *city of God*: There is some time after baptisme in infancy before they have capacity to be *hearers*, but as soone as they can heare to profit, so soone they must be received, not as *strangers* but as *children*, not as *Infidels* but *Christians*: They must be hearers, and that with some good proficiency before they can be *communicants*: But to deny a person entitled and qualified as before, because not in Church-fellowship in a Congregationall way, offering himselfe and desiring it, is to debarre him of that right, of which by the gracious dispensation of God he stands possessed: He belongs to *Christ*, he must therefore partake of that which *is of Christ*: He is of the household, he must therefore have of *the foode of the household*: *The stewards of the mysteries of God* must be accountable in case they doe deny it.

3. Consectary, Holy conversation.

To come to some practique observations, All possible engagements and obligations unto *holinesse of conversation* necessarily follow from this royall priviledge and high advancement of *birth-holinesse*. We blame those of *noble and generous* birth that betake themselves to *sordid and ignoble wayes*: Those thus degenerating are a blot to their families, a disgrace and reproach to their race: No birth equall in honour to that of Christians: *Theodosius* worthily esteemed it a greater honour that he was a *Christian* then that he was an *Emperour*: None degenerate so foulely and blame-worthily as they when their conversation is *unchristian*. Wayes of sinne are for *sinners of the Gentiles*, a way proper for *Turkes and Pagans*: let the *holy seed* be *holy*, their *demeanour* suited to their *honour*: *Sardanapalus* the King may with lesse infamy *spinne among women* (a worke farre below his throne) then a Chri-

stian may *sinne with heathen*: The *Martyrs* in the primitive times being moved to sweare by *the fortune of Cæsar*, thought that the answer was full and faire to say they were *Christians*; Such answer should he have that would tempt to ungodlinesse: *Should such a one as I flie* saith *Nehemiah*, his honour would not suffer him to be so base: Should such a man as a Christian (the least of whom is greater then *Nehemiah's* better) be for sinne, *not a sinner by birth*, be for *sinne in his life*? *Baptisme* is the greatest *honour*: Such beare Christs name and weare his livery, They have that title in which *Iude*, *Iames* and other of the Apostles gloried; *A Servant of Iesus Christ*: *Baptisme* is the greatest *engagement*: *Let every one that nameth Christ depart from iniquity*. To talke of baptisme and live in sin is to weare the *Colours* of one *and plot and fight* for another, to weare *Christs* colours and fight for *Satan*: *Baptisme* renders a sinner up to the heavieſt *punishment*: The high favours shewed the Jewes made a Jew to fare worse in the wayes of sinne then an heathen; The high favours shewed to *Christians*, make *Christians* to fare worse in sinfull wayes then *heathens*: Let me presse it in the Apostles words though the providence of God keeps me out of his condition, *I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you, that ye walke worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*. All in a Christians calling bespeakes this holinesse; *Hee by whom* he is called; *The worke to which* he is called; *The company* unto which he is joyned; *The Attendants* by whom he is guarded; *The Rule* whereby he is guided; *The Seale* by which he is confirmed, and the *place* whither he makes and tends, all are *holy*.

Nebe.6.11.
Mat.11.11.
Iames 1.1.
Iude v.1.
1 Pet.1.1.
1 Tim.2.19.
Amos 3.2.
Heb.2.3.
Ephes.4.1.
1 Pet.1.15.
1 Thes.4.7.
Ephes.2.19.
Mat.25.31.
Rom.1.2.
Ephes.1.13.
Heb 9.8.

4. Consectary, Holy education.

Let the Parents of such seed now see what *education* is expected; *Breeding* must answer *Birth and Descent*: A Christian is of the noblest birth: The Apostle calls upon parents *to bring up their children in nurture and admonition of the Lord*: God may call on them thus to bring up *his children*; In nature *theirs*: in Covenant *Gods*: Every Christian parent hath a child of God committed to his care and tuition: How great a solecisme is it that parents should dedicate children so soone as borne unto *Christ*, professing to the world that they belong to him, and: that with *Hannah* (concerning *Samuel*) they intend them for him, when nothing appeares in their lives, but that they might be given to *Molech*; somewhat worse then the mongrell seed that spoke halfe in the language of *Canaan*, and halfe of *Ashdod*: Scarce a word can be heard out of their mouthes for to argue that they are Christians; *lisping out oathes* as soone as *words*, put to *learne trades*, and little regard had that they may *know Christ Iesus*: And how much is it to be desired that authority (who I trust will make good that we have a *Christian Nation*) would take order for more carefull catechisticall teaching of youth in the wayes of *Christian Religion*, that God may not complaine of *England* as of Israel; *My people perish for want of knowledge*. A people of God and a people ignorant to perdition and destruction: *England* is highly *honoured of God* by this gracious call; with *Capernaum lifted up to Heaven*: *England* would highly *honour God* if care might be taken that all might *know God* from the highest to the lowest: We shall never be a *Gospel-like people* till we be a *knowing people*, till we take care that as we are *Iewes by nature*, so we may be *Iewes in qualification*,

Hosea 4.7.

so

so borne, so bred, that as our youth is *descended* so also they may be *trained*.

5. Consectary, The danger of persecution. *Psal.* 79. 1, 2, 3.

Those may see whom they oppose that stand in opposition of a people thus interested, a people so ingratiated to God in Covenant that there is not the least infant in whom God hath not his title and right of challenge. The aggravation of the Psalmists complaint is, that the *heathens* are come into thine inheritance, the dead bodies of thy *servants* have they given to be meat unto the fowles of the Heaven, the flesh of thy *Saints* unto the beasts of the earth: The whole body of such a people stand in relation to God, as the *Inheritance*, the *servants*, and *Saints* of God; Such inscriptions we find in St *Pauls* Epistles, not one of the whole body is excluded, but they are such by *Covenant*, and such by *calling*: Enough hath been said to make it to appeare, that the denomination reaches even infants, *who are the Lords heritage, and Christs name is upon them*: As it is accounted an happy work to dash the *little ones of Babylon against the wall*, because of the hostility of that *Nation* against God and his people: So it is a like execration to intermeddle with the little ones of *Sion*, by reason of the holinesse of such a people, their Covenant-relations in which they stand interested. Much is spoken in Scripture against the enemies of the righteous, *the haters of them shall be destroyed, he that offends against them shall not be innocent*: God observes every cariage of the adversary towards them in misery; they speake not a word, but God hath it against them; when *Ammonites*, *Tyrians* cry *Aha* against the people of the Lord they are *twitted* with it, and threatned for it. Not a *proud word* that they utter, but it is brought in to fill up the charge against them: yea, every *eye* that is cast with approbation of the adversary, every *encouraging word* they speake, and every *act* they doe against such a people, yea *injuries* of elder times are kept in the decke and laid to them; And all because that they stand in this relation to God, as *His* in Covenant; which you cannot limit onely to the *personally righteous*, but all that are of a *societie and fellowship* that is such, that are interested in a *righteous cause*. The *holy anointing oyle* did make *sacred*, when yet too often the man was wicked, and therefore *David* looked upon *Saul* as the Lords anointed. It holds in analogy and proportion unto all that have any Unction from God, as all the called of God have, *When they were but a few in number, yea very few, and strangers--When they went from one Nation to another, from one kingdome to another people, He suffered no man to doe them wrong, yea he reproved Kings for their sakes*, saying, *Touch not mine Anointed*: All the people of God have that anointing from God, that none may dare to intermeddle to their harme. God promises his people that dwell in Sion that the burden of Assyria shall be taken away from off their shoulder, and his yoke from off their necke, and that the yoke shall be destroyed, *because of the Anointing*.

Psal. 127 3. *Mat.* 18. 5. *Psal.* 137. 9. 2 *King* 8. 12. *Ezek.* 26. 2; 36. 2. *Obad.* 12. Ibid. *Psal.* 137. 7. *Obad.* 13. 14. *Deut.* 25. 17. *Psal.* 105. 12, 13, 14, 15. *Isa* 10. 27.

Some will say, as this is carried, The danger of intermedling with any is with us alike: Even Papists and the worst of men that are called Protestants are thus of a people that are called Gods people, and go by the name of Christians. Object.

For answer: I shall not enter upon that controversie, what there is of the *being of a Church* under the Papacy: The *Papacy* it selfe is none of it, but on- Answ.

ly a *botch* bred in it, and cleaving to it. Onely this I say, That he that shall oppose a *Papist* under the notion of a *Christian*, shall beare his sinne, and that upon the grounds that have been given: Though a Papists damnable errours in the faith shut him out from the happinesse of Christians, yet such an adversaries persecution renders him guilty of opposing the faith of Christ Iesus. And he that followes with injuries a carnall Protestant, because of Profession of the *sinceritie of Religion*, in opposition to *Antichristianisme*, is formally guilty of persecution. The hearers resembled to the *rocky ground suffer persecution for the Word*, as doth the good ground that *brings forth fruit with patience*. But to come home with more cleare satisfaction.

A people of a *fouly-polluted Ordinance* standing in opposition to a people of a *pure and untainted way*, are as a people void of Ordinances, are as a people without God in comparison. The opposition of the puritie of his service God accounts as the opposition of his great *Name*, though it be by a people that goe under that name of His people: And therefore though *Elijah* take
2 *Kings* 19.10. so much to heart the pulling down of *Altars* set up by *Ieroboam* as *Gods Altars*, when it was done by Israel apostatizing and turned to *Baal*, and (in opposition to the worship of *Baal*) makes that way of worship at *Dan* and
1 *Kings* 18.21. *Bethel* a *following of God*. (Those *two opinions* that the ten Tribes *halted between* were the worship of the *false god Baal*, and the *false way of worship* set up by *Ieroboam*; which corruption of worship (being now to draw them *from Baalisme*) *he is for the present contented to wave*:) Yet we well know
2 *Kings* 15.9. the *brand* that lies on *Ieroboam* in bringing in that worship of his, scarce the like on any man in Scripture (the man of sin only excepted) the high phrases
2 *Chro.* 11.15. also in which this worship of his is set out, making *Priests for the high places, and devils*, with the height of guilt to which he rose in *calling the Levites out from executing the Priests office*; And howsoever God often cals
Vers. 14. *Hos.* 4.6. that people of the ten tribes by the name of *his people* as having Ordinances, though miserably polluted, yet in opposition to *Iudah*, where more pure Ordinances were injoyed, they are said to be *without God, without a teaching*
2 *Chron.* 15.3. *Priest, and without the Law*: And fighting against *Iudah* who could reckon up the particulars of the Ordinances of God in their puritie, they are charged
2 *Chron.* 13.12. *to fight against the Lord God of their fathers*: To come neerer home in an Instance: If the Turkish power should fall upon a *Popish State* under the name and notion of Christians, they were guilty with *Saul* of persecuting the *Lord Iesus*: If this Popish State fall upon a reformed nation, they are much more guilty. A fouler sinne for a people of God in *name and title*, to persecute his people in *truth*, then for a people strangers to God, to persecute a people only in name and title: Scripture prayers against heathens we may fitly apply in our sufferings under the hands of Papists. *Pilate* might have been guilty in persecution of a *Pharisee* as a Jew; yet that nation was much
Ioh. 18.35. more guilty (being *Iewes by nature*,) in delivering *Christ Iesus* into *Pilate's* hands, though Christ had been no greater then one of his Disciples: A *Papist* persecuting a *formall carnall Protestant*, under the notion of a man professing against idolatrous wayes, is a man blaspheming the faith; This man thus persecuted, persecuting another for the power of Godlinesse, professing the

same

ſame truth is equally, yea more guilty. The very ſin of *Cain* againſt his brother, Their Religions were both one, but *Cain's* in form, and *Abel's* in power. The reſult of the whole is to let us ſee what it is to oppoſe a *people* under any notion of *Gods people*, under any notion *of belonging to him*. A man may have his reward giving in *the name of a Diſciple*, though he to whom hee gives be ſuch as God will never own for a Diſciple. And anſwerably may incurre vengeance in oppoſition of one under ſuch a name, though with thoſe on the rocky ground he be nothing leſſe in deed and truth. 1 *Ioh.* 2. 12. *Matth.* 10. 42.

Abundance of ſweet conſolations yet flow from this birth-priviledge, and that in ſeverall ſtreames. 6. Conſectary of conſolation.

1. In regard of *Nations*.
2. In regard of *Perſons*.

1. In regard of *Nations*, They have a royall tranſcendencie above all others, as onely worthy the name of a people, Enjoying the *Light*, *Nigh unto God*, A people of *hope*, and *expectation*; when others are darkneſſe, without hope, and without God in the world. The *Pſalmiſt* reckons up many ſweet bleſſings of a nation, *That our ſonnes may be as plants growne up in their youth, that our daughters may be as corner ſtones poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a palace, That our garners may be full affording all manner of ſtore, that our ſheep may bring forth thouſands and ten thouſands in our ſtreets; That our oxen may be ſtrong to labour, that there be no breaking in, nor going out, that there be no complaining in our ſtreets:* All theſe are ſingular nationall favours, but only ſerving to make up, not an abſolute, but comparative bleſſednеſſe; This one riſes higher and makes it compleat, *Bleſſed are the people whoſe God is the Lord.* See what is ſaid of *Ieruſalem* by the Pſalmiſt: *Loe, the Kings were aſſembled, they paſſed by together, they ſaw it, and ſo they marvelled, they were troubled and haſted away, Feare tooke hold on them, and paine as on a woman in travell*, and we find the reaſon given is, *God is knowne in her palaces for a refuge*, they have *God nigh in all that they call upon him for*, as *Moſes* hath it, No people can ſo bottome their prayers againſt Adverſaries as the people of Gods Holineſſe. To Nations. *Pſal.* 144. 12, 13, 14. *Verſe* 15. *Pſal.* 48. 4, 5. *Verſe* 3. *Deut.* 4. 7.

This mercie is a birth-mercie to a people (to hold alluſion to my text) *Iewes by nature*, whoſe parents with *Timothy's* from one to another have been beleevers: And while nationall provocations breake not forth (which onely with God have a *ſeparating and deafning power*) his eare is ready to hear, and his hand to help: *While he ſees not iniquitie in Iacob, nor perverſneſſe in Iſrael* (which muſt be underſtood of nationall out-breaches from God, which after by *Baalams* counſell followed) ſo long *God is among them as the ſhout of a King*, and *there is no ſorcerie or divination againſt them*: A nation *faſt to God* hath *God faſt* to them. 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. *Iſai.* 59. 1. *Numb.* 23. 21. *Verſ.* 23. 2 *Chron.* 15. 2.

2. In regard of perſons, for { *Themſelves.* / *Poſteritie.* } To perſons.

For *themſelves*, It is much to be able with the Pſalmiſt to ſay, *Thou art he* For themſelves.

Psal. 22.9,10. *that tooke me out of the wombe, Thou diddest make me to hope when I was upon my mothers breasts: I was cast upon thee from the wombe, thou art my God from my mothers belly.* This puts upon confidence in prayer (as an argument drawn from long continued acquaintance) as there followes: *Be not farre from me,* *Vers.* 11. *for trouble is neere.* Such have timely knowledge of God, sucking in somewhat of him while they suck milk from the breasts: An expression of height setting out this Birth-happinesse, that hath sure more in it then can be applyed to *sinners of the Gentiles*: See how the Psalmist yet further pleads it with *Psal.* 116.16. God: *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant and the son of thine hand-*
Exod 21.4. *maid.* An allusion to the Law of servants, who were the *inheritance of the*
Levit. 25.16. *Master* in whose house they were borne. I am such saith the Psalmist (*thy servant, thy servant*) with all earnestnesse of affection. I am of thine *inheritance*, I am one of thine *house-borne servants*, my mother was thine hand-maide. The same relation he pleades also, and in the same words, *Psal.* 86.16. This
Isai. 49.1. *Isaiah* in like manner takes notice of, *The Lord hath called me from the wombe, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my Name.* The Apostle will have the Ephesians to *remember that past time when they were without*
Ephes. 2.12. *Christ, being Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, without God in the world.* There never was a time in which these of this Birth-priviledge were in that condition; From the wombe they were Gods heritage, and with *Timothy* (some in greater
2 Tim. 3.15. some in lesser measure) *from children have the knowledge of the Scriptures*, if
Luke 1.15. not with *Iohn Baptist full of the holy Ghost from the wombe*: which doubtlesse is the happinesse of not few among Christians, who are eminent in sanctification, whose growth in Grace is seene, and yet the beginnings not knowne. Howsoever they are *nigh*, when others are *afarre off*, at the
Iob. 4.22. *pooles brimme* waiting *the Angels moving of it. Salvation is of the Iewes,*
Iames 1.21. saith our Saviour; They are under the joyfull sound of that Word *which is*
Luke 19.9. *able to save the soule: Salvation is of his house who is the sonne of Abraham.*

In respect of posteritie. As it is full of Consolation to Beleevers in respect of themselves, so also in reference to posteritie: Their children are Gods children: They being of the Lords *Inheritance*, their children are *his heritage* in like manner:
Ezek. 16.20. These *bring forth children to God, their seed be owners and challenges for His:* An infinite love in God, an unspeakable comfort to a parent, when the Infant, who by corruption of nature is in Satans jawes, in no lesse *danger of Hell*, then *Moses* was of the *water*, and not so much as sensible of it; God pleases to looke upon him in this condition and to make it *the time of love*, and to find out wayes of freedome. What the Apostle speakes from the Prophet of Gods care of the *Gentiles*, is certainly true being applyed to
Rom. 10.20. *Infants. I was found of them that sought me not, and made manifest to them that enquired not after me.* Had we that hopelesse opinion of our children as Papists of theirs that dye without Baptisme; what a wretched case were it (with *David*) to part with an Infant out of the world? How could such mourne in any other way then those *that are without hope?* parting with an Infant without part in Christ, and in no better posture towards

wards God then the seed of the *sinners of the Gentiles.* But wee finde God *more rich in mercie,* Christ himselfe *embracing them in their infancie,* and taking them into his speciall love as those that beare his name: And though death prevent their *Baptisme,* He that hath appointed Ordinances is not tyed to them, but can save without them. *Bellarmine* confesseth that the desire of *Baptisme* in one of the *Catechumeni,* (that is, one instructed in the Principles of Christ and not baptized) doth save; though the text, *Iohn* 3.5. understood with their Coment be in the Letter against it, why then should not that Grace, which when the person is of capacitie would shew it selfe in desires, qualifie for Salvation in like manner? Finding this *love in God, these bowels in Christ,* we may safely conclude, that Children *have blisse,* Parents *have comfort,* and let *God have the Glorie.*

FINIS.

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